

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A watercraft capable of accommodating passengers for travel both on the surface and below the surface of water comprising a modular design including a hull module and a passenger housing module, wherein the hull module includes a V-shaped speedboat-like hull and wherein the passenger housing module is a pressure vessel.
2. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 1 wherein said hull module includes at least one air bladder which, when inflated, displaces water from a compartment within the hull, and which, when deflated, permits water to enter the hull compartment.
3. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 2 wherein said at least one air bladder within said hull compartment is connected to a source of compressed gas such that said at least one air bladder may be inflated or deflated at will to induce the watercraft to surface when said at least one air bladder is inflated and to submerge when said at least one air bladder is deflated.
4. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 3 wherein said compressed gas resides within said hull module in a plurality of compressed gas tanks.
5. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 2 comprising four air bladders.
6. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 5 wherein said watercraft is induced to submerge by deflating said air bladders and to ascend for surface travel by inflating said air bladders.
7. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 1 wherein said hull module includes a sealed compartment which may be filled with air or water at will.
8. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 1 further comprising an engine module.

9. (Currently amended) ~~The watercraft according to claim 8~~ A watercraft capable of accommodating passengers for travel both on the surface and below the surface of water, the watercraft comprising a hull module, a passenger housing module, and an engine module, wherein said engine module permits water to enter up to a first height when said watercraft resides on the surface of a body of water, and which permits water to enter up to a second height when said watercraft is submerged, such that an equalization of internal and external pressure is achieved.

10. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 9 wherein said first height and said second height of water is controlled by a valve which shuts off at a predetermined water height within said engine module.

11. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 10 wherein said valve comprises a float.

12. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 11 wherein said float shuts off when water entering said engine module reaches a predetermined height, and wherein said engine module is pressurized by a source of compressed gas as needed to maintain parity between pressure within said engine module and water pressure external to said engine module.

13. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 1 wherein said passenger housing module comprises a substantially tubular passenger compartment.

14. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 13 wherein said substantially tubular passenger compartment may be opened and closed at will, but which, when closed, forms an air- and water-tight compartment.

15. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 14 wherein said substantially tubular passenger compartment when closed is maintained at a constant one atmosphere (14.7 psi) of pressure by means of a source of compressed gas and the structural support provided for the passenger compartment.

16. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 15 wherein said source of compressed gas provides a stream of gas which not only maintains said compartment at a constant one atmosphere of pressure, but which also replenishes the gas in said compartment so as to contain an optimal mixture of oxygen, nitrogen and other gasses, as needed, to ensure the safety and health of any living beings contained within said passenger compartment.

17. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 16 wherein said compartment comprises a non-deformable translucent material to form at least a portion of the walls of said compartment when said compartment is closed.

18. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 17 wherein said translucent material is a translucent acrylic material.

19. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 18 wherein said translucent acrylic material is plexiglass or other similar translucent plastic.

20. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 18 wherein said translucent acrylic material is capable of sustaining external pressure, when supported by an internal gas pressure of one atmosphere, equal to the maximum pressure anticipated to be encountered by said watercraft well beyond the pressure expected at the maximum submersion depth for said watercraft.

21. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 20 wherein said translucent acrylic material is at least one inch thick.

22. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 21 wherein said translucent acrylic material is in the form of curved segments which form sealed portions of the walls of said substantially tubular passenger compartment.

23. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 1 further comprising at least one

diesel or gas motor for above-water surface propulsion of said watercraft.

24. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 23 further comprising at least one electric motor for submerged propulsion of said watercraft.

25. (Original) The watercraft according to claim 1 comprising a total mass of approximately 15,000 pounds.

26. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 25 comprising a ballast of water, and comprising an added emergency release ballast weighing approximately 3,000 pounds.

27. (Previously presented) The watercraft according to claim 26 wherein said release ballast is automatically released from said watercraft if a depth below a preset limit, or a carbon dioxide content in the passenger compartment above a pre-determined tolerance is reached, thereby causing said watercraft to immediately ascend to the water surface.

28. (Previously presented) A submersible watercraft amenable to surface transport as a conventional above-water surface watercraft, comprising a sealable, pressurizable passenger compartment, a hull, and an engine compartment, wherein the hull is not a pressure hull, but contains air-bladders by means of which water is expelled from the hull and by means of which watercraft buoyancy is controlled and wherein the hull provides for surface transport like conventional above-water surface watercraft when water is expelled from the hull.

29. (Previously presented) A method of making a combination surface and submersible watercraft which comprises manufacturing a hull module, sealable pressurizable passenger compartment module, and engine compartment module, and affixing said modules to each other.

30. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 29, wherein said hull module further comprises air bladders which may be inflated by an operator of said watercraft when surface travel of the watercraft is desired, and deflated and filled with water ballast, when submerged

travel of the watercraft is desired.